

THE IMMOVABILITY OF THE BELIEVER

NO. 1450

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 22, 1878,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*"They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abides forever."
Psalm 125:1.*

THIS is the first verse of one of the Songs of degrees. These Songs were probably sung by the pilgrims as they went up to Jerusalem, when they halted at the various stations or passed certain places of interest. It is very possible that this psalm burst forth from joyful lips at the moment when Zion first came into sight, and the worshippers gazed upon the city of their solemnities. Happy pilgrims! They had left behind them many a dreary glen and dangerous wood, and now they saw in full view their journey's end and therefore they sang with all the gathered joy of days gone by. They could not have so exulted if they had not previously sorrowed. The same truth may be learned from the use of the term, "Song of degrees," it warns us that this psalm rises out of that which preceded it, as one step of a staircase rises above its fellow. David had not sung the one hundred and twenty-fifth psalm if he had not first learned to sing the one hundred and twenty-fourth. If he had not been where men threatened to swallow him up quickly, and found in such a case that the Lord was on his side, he could not have been quite so sure that, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed." Our experiences are our instructors even concerning themselves. They shed light upon each other, and we learn enough from one trial to begin to unfold the mysteries of another. The one hundred and twenty-fourth psalm must first to some extent, be passed through, so that we see that all our help lies in the Lord, or we shall never reach to the grand positiveness of this one hundred and twenty-fifth, and sing, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion."

We have heard some of the brave expressions of Christian heroes and we have thought, "I wish I could speak with that man's faith." Brothers and sisters, to possess such faith you must take with it, its owner's trials. You may rest assured that God never gave a penny's worth of faith to any man that it might be hoarded in a cupboard. Faith is sure to be used, and what is more, great faith is not possessed by those who are untrained in its need and use. It is a sword which is not girt upon a man till he has come to years and strength to use it. I do greatly joy in that utterance of Luther when going to Worms. Some of his friends told him that he would be burned to powder, as Huss had been before him, but he laughed and said he had no fear. "If," said he, "they shall build a fire between Wittenberg and Worms that should reach to heaven, in the Lord's name I would appear, and step into behemoth's mouth, between his great teeth and confess Christ, and let him do his pleasure." His joy at that time seems to have been overflowing, though his danger was manifest to all. Now, this holy boasting sounds well, but it is not to be imitated by every baby in grace. This man had passed through a preparatory process which brought his mind into a triumphant state, in which he was a king of men, a lion among a pack of dogs. It is not to be forgotten that there was a subsequent sinking of his soul, as in the case of Elijah, to prevent his being exalted above measure at the recollection of his own courage. For this, also, he who would have a right royal faith must stand prepared. They that do business in great waters must sail in ships fitted for stormy seas. You and I, perhaps, paddle around the shores of a quiet lake, where our little boat is large enough for most purposes. We are not tested by great storms, neither is our boat held by great anchors. Our needs are not of the greatest and therefore, our supplies are not like those of the larger craft which sail upon greater waters. Still, one would wish to be among the Lord's most useful servants, and to that end would cheerfully accept the great risk. We would not wish to remain babies, but we desire to become full-grown men, and surely David is one, who has drank up the one hundred and twenty-fourth psalm as a somewhat bitter cup and then feels that he can dine upon the one hundred and twenty-fifth

and rise to bless the Lord, who makes His people to “be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abides forever.”

Note that the metaphor which is used in the text was drawn by the pilgrims from the hill before them, or, if the psalm does not belong to pilgrims, but to all Israel, they took the comparison from that mountain with which they were best acquainted. If they might not all see Lebanon, which lay at the northern extremity of the land, if they might not all behold the excellence of Carmel, or gaze upon the heights of Hermon, yet once in the year they must all look upon Zion, “where the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel.” The emblem was therefore a familiar one and I wish sometimes that we were more apt at sanctifying to holy uses the common objects which are round about us, these streets and houses, our own country and our own home. I am afraid our eyes are open when we seek emblems of sadness and we find them on every hedge and in any garden-plot. But we should also look at home when we need metaphors of thanksgiving with which to set forth our security and our comfort in the Lord. To have a house at all is something. Cold blows the wind, but warm is our own fireside. And even so, “Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.” All you who love your homes may see in them the figure and representation of your dwelling in God in peace forever. Believing Englishmen, you may especially bless God that your country gives you an admirable picture of your own security. You dwell alone, separated by the floods from all other nations; this is the security of our beloved isle—

*“He bade the ocean round you flow,
Not bars of brass could guard you so.”*

They that trust in the Lord shall be as these happy islands which shall not know the rod of the oppressor, for the Lord has guarded them with a better defense than walls or bulwarks. Hebrew comparisons were most fit for Hebrew believers. Let us make English figures out of our own circumstances and surroundings. Thus will it appear as if our faith, were less a tradition and more truly a present-day reality. Thus also, will true religion wear a more real and homely aspect, and will strike others with greater force. Faith, when she is active and observant, finds illustrations of her own blessedness all around. Amid the descending snows of this cheerless wintry day, she says, “Did He not say that *cold* and heat, and summer and *winter* should never cease?” Have we not His covenant with the earth still fulfilled before our eyes, and may we not rest certain therefore, that the covenant with His people will not fail? Are not these snowflakes tokens of His Word which comes not forth in vain? Does not this bitter chill assure us of His omnipotence of whom we read, “He casts forth His ice like morsels: who can stand before His cold?” Open your eyes, my brethren, and look about, and as the believing Israelite saw Zion and began to sing about it, so shall you also “go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing.”

Now, to come to the text—I have merely touched its angles in this rough preface. We have in the verse before us, first of all, *a lowly people*—“They that trust in the Lord.” One talks a good deal about them, yet they are of no reputation among men. Secondly, *a singular stability* in them—“they shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abides forever.” And then, thirdly, we shall for a while consider *the evident reason* for this stability of theirs.

I. First, here we read of A LOWLY PEOPLE. That which is said of them is nothing very great in the judgment of human reason, they are merely said to “*trust in the Lord.*” This is a very simple thing to do. God gives promises, and they believe them. God is at work in providence and they trust Him. God invites them to the mercy seat and they approach it. God gives them His Son as their salvation and they believe in Him. God grants His Holy Spirit as their teacher, and they learn of Him and obey Him. To sum up all in one, they “trust in the Lord.” “That is a small matter,” cries one, “any fool can do that.” Just so, perhaps more would do so, if the most of men were not foolishly wise. Any child can trust, and more would trust in the Lord if more men were childlike. “Trust in the Lord.” It needs no effort of intellect to trust, and it needs no laborious education to learn the way. Trusting in the Lord is simply depending where there is unquestionable reason for reliance, believing what is assuredly true, and acting upon it. Trusting in the Lord is taking at His Word, one who cannot lie, or change, or fail. And certainly this is no great feat if we look at it from the carnal man’s own point of view. These trusters in the Lord cannot plume themselves upon the feat they have performed, for to trust in the Lord would naturally seem to be one of the commonplaces of human thought. Should not a being trust its Creator? Strange that any crea-

ture should think it difficult! It is a sure sign of the depravity of our race that we not only think it difficult, but find it so. Sure evidence of how much Satan has bewitched the human mind, that simple faith has even become impossible to unrenewed hearts, though it is in itself the easiest exercise of the mind. Men cannot even understand what trusting in the Lord means till God the Holy Spirit opens their understandings, and then He must both beget and nourish their faith or they will have none of it.

To trust in the Lord we have admitted to be a very simple matter, but at the same time *it is very right*, is it not? Poor simpletons that we are, we can even appeal to the wise ones of the earth and let them be judges in this matter. Should not a man trust in his own Creator? Is it possible for us to discover a being more worthy of confidence than our own God? Does He not deserve to be trusted? In what one respect has He ever played us false? Is there a single instance in which the Word of the Lord, once given, has been found to fail? When have thirsty mouths resorted to this fountain and found it dry? If there is anything against the veracity of God, let us hear it. Evidence is invited. The Lord Himself bids any testify against Him who have anything to declare. Lo, these thousands of years have rolled along, and Jehovah has challenged men to bring forth their strong arguments against Him if they could, but they have found no cause why He should be distrusted, and His Word dishonored. If then there is new evidence, O unbelievers, you are here to declare it. Let us hear it. There is none. You know that there is none. Surely it is a matter of clear honesty and right to any man to trust Him till He has deceived us or afforded us cause for suspicion. We always say we will trust the bridge that has carried us safely over. Has not the Lord been faithful to those who have trusted Him? What say the trusters of former times, or of this present? Lives there one who will come forward and say, "I have trusted in the Lord and have been confounded. I have stayed myself upon the Eternal and I have found Him false"? No, hell itself contains not one adversary of God who dares to utter such a slander against His divine faithfulness. Well, brethren, if we are told that our trust is simple, we will be reconciled to the statement by the equally manifest fact that it is right.

Moreover, is it not *wise*? What can be wiser? Those of us who have tried trusting in God have never found Him fail, whereas when we have trusted in men we have been disappointed. You who have been self-reliant must have found self-reliance to be, at certain times, a terrible mistake. But those who are God-reliant have never found an instance in which their rest in the Lord has been a questionable policy. Would it not be an awfully grand fact if a man should make a failure of his life, and could then turn round and truly say, "Oh God, the cause of my failure was that I trusted alone in You and You could not, or would not help me"? As there is a terrible grandeur in the infamous wickedness of Milton's Satan, so much of grandeur that sometimes the reader has been made forgetful of the vileness of the fiend in the greatness of the rebel, so there would be a sort of appalling splendor about a being who should have implicitly lived to God, depended upon Him, and then should have failed. The idea is next door to blasphemous, and tremblingly I let it pass before you that you may perceive that it can have no real existence. Borrowing a poetic license, I have shadowed it, but I know it to be utterly impossible. See, then, how certain of success is the believer! How impossible it is that he should make shipwreck! The mere notion of it has passed before you, and you have rejected it as worse than absurd. It must be wise to link yourself to Him whose name is Love. To get that little boat of yours in tow with the Infinite must be wise! To gain some kind of connection between yourself, the creature of an hour, and the Eternal, who spoke the world into existence and whose glance will return it to nothing, must be wise. It must be a grandly wise thing to be joined unto the Lord God, and there is no link that can at first be cast between God and sinful man, but that of simple confidence, be that link ours at this moment and forever. Blessed are they that by the Holy Spirit have been led to trust in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us speak further about these simple people—these half fools, as the world thinks them to be. They came to trust in God as a matter of necessity, they could not do otherwise. Why is it that numbers of people deal with their friends on trust? It is because no other way is open to them. Matthew Henry says, "All that deal with God must deal upon trust and He will give comfort to those only that give credit to Him." We cannot bring the Lord our merits, but let us give Him our confidence. Because we are poor, let us appeal to His riches. Because we cannot help ourselves, let us cast ourselves upon His power. What else can we do? God is to be trusted, let us trust Him with all our hearts. Do other trusts invite us? Let us reject them, for we remember the past heartbreaks which they have caused us. Lord, we trust in You, and come to cast ourselves upon You! To whom else can we go? You have the words of eternal

life. Oftentimes trust is to a believer his only path, he is shut up to faith. He must believe or die. He is pushed into a corner; he is bewildered, he can scarcely pray, he cannot comprehend himself, nor lift a finger. And now trusting is the resort of his desperation, it is not his choice, but the fruit of compulsion. Brethren, I feel it a sweet thing to faint away into faith. Did you ever do that? Were you ever so far gone that at last you have melted right away from yourself and sunk into God? I believe that this swooning faintness is the door of faith to multitudes of souls. They enter into peace, not by strength, but by sheer weakness. They do not run into the arms of God, but they fall there. There are doubtless some who run to Christ, for we read of one who came running to Him, but there are others who must be dropped down before Him upon a bed. It matters not how they come to Jesus, so long as they come to Him. Yet it is worthy of note that faith in many cases is a child of weakness. On its human side it is a Jabez, borne with sorrow, the birth of self's expiring pang.

Yet faith which thus arises out of very weakness, like the phoenix from its own ashes, has a great side to it. It is, in some respects, the most sublime effort of the human mind. If ever the bright spirits which stand before the throne test their own faculties upon the mysteries of providence, foreknowledge, predestination, and the free will of man—if they ever inquire where the agency of the created ends and where the divine is found alone—if ever, I say, they try the edge of their intellect upon themes like these, they make an end by declaring, "We are lost. Our spirits cannot comprehend the infinite, but we believe in God, and are sure that He orders all things aright." They doff their coronets before the throne of their superior King, in reverent confidence in His eternal goodness. This is their grandest worship, their truest adoration—they do believe. Brethren, faith is not of earth alone, but saints and angels in heaven believe in the Eternal God. It is a crime to suspect them of the contrary. The mystery of Jehovah's dealings still manifests their faith, they remember His unfulfilled promises and they look for their accomplishment, for they have not as yet seen the Bridegroom coming to His bride, nor the earth subdued unto His sway, nor the full manifestation of the creation, when the sons of God shall be revealed, and the creature itself shall cease from its groaning. Trust is the simplicity of a baby, but it is the glory of a genius. It is grand in seraph or in saint, and while it befits a child it is worthy of an archangel. Poor fools are these trusters, yet they are near akin to nobler beings.

Now, can you tell me why is it that if a man trusts in God he is generally despised by his fellows? If a person were to say, "As for my getting on in the world, I am trusting to a friend of mine who is influential with the government," or if another said, "My father was born before me and he will see me provided for," nobody would condemn either of such persons as an idiot, but would treat his confidence as quite legitimate. But if any one of us were to say, "Our confidence, as for our future in this world is resting in our heavenly Father," there would be a shrugging of the shoulders, a knowing look of the eyes, and when they got far enough away, our critics would say, "That man is a fool, or a hypocrite." Alas, God is nobody to the bulk of mankind, and it seems a ridiculous thing to them to trust in Him. To trust in God is to the worldly man the next thing to building castles in the air. The unbelieving laugh, because they cannot understand us, but what is the reason they become angry with us? Why do they turn again, and rend us? Other simpletons they let alone, but those who trust in God become objects of scorn. The believer finds that a jest is made upon his faith, and mirth is excited by his confidence. What he says is widely retold, and more than a little distorted, and he is looked upon as little better than a natural fool. This was always so and always will be so till the Lord comes. He that is born after the flesh persecutes him that is born after the Spirit. The man who walks by sight cannot understand the man who walks by faith, how could he? And if we get to trust in God and that trust becomes the great motive power of our life, as I earnestly hope it may be with each one of us, then the worldly man will not know how to make heads or tails of our conduct, and he will first of all ridicule, and then oppose. Care nothing for the opposition, he who is right has conquered.

Before we proceed further, let us notice how the text includes all who truly trust in the Lord, both small and great, for it says, "They that trust in the Lord." It does not say, "They that trust in the Lord with a highly intelligent faith." It is a good thing to understand much, and to trust in the Lord with growing knowledge, but, dear soul, if you do not know much, yet if you are trusting in the Lord, you shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be removed. The text does not limit the blessing to those who have great faith. The stronger your faith the better, the more faith you can have the richer and happier your life will be, but the assurance of our text is for those who have any faith, even a mustard seed of faith. They that

trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion. And note it does not say, “Those who have had faith for many years.” It is a great thing to have had faith for a long lifetime, it ripens and sweetens, but this promise is made to the youngest as well as to the oldest, to those who have believed in the Master’s Word for a few years, or months, or days, as well as to the veterans. They that trust in the Lord, though it was only yesterday that they began to trust, shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed. Neither does the text demand a loftiness and heroism of trust, but it simply speaks of the trust itself. Your faith may not be like that of Samson, which slays a thousand men, but it may be a humble, teachable faith, which sits like Mary at the Master’s feet at home. Well, you shall be as Mount Zion that cannot be removed. Only have real trust in God, and you shall have the steadfastness of the sacred hill of the Lord.

Some of you may have been so sweetly taught to trust in the Lord that you can say, “Yes, blessed be His name, I do trust Him, altogether, unreservedly and without a suspicion.” Be you abundantly sure that the text is your portion this day. I hope there are some of us who can now trust our Lord in any case. If we do but see the Lord’s Word, in any teaching, however mysterious, or obnoxious, to flesh and blood, our questions are at an end. We accept unhesitatingly the hard and the deep things of God. If we see any attribute, or promise, or half a promise of our Lord to be on our side, we feel more than safe. A good old saint, who lately lay dying, told her pastor that she was resting upon *the justice* of God. The good pastor thought that she had chosen a strange point of the divine character to rest on, but it was not at all so, for she explained herself. “I rest in His justice to my great Surety and Substitute that He would not let Him die for me in vain.” Thus hard, stern justice becomes a blessed pillow for our confidence, and none can be softer for a dying head. Though justice is as a stone, yet he that can use it as Jacob used the stone at Bethel shall see the ladder which reached to heaven and angels trooping upon its rungs. Awkward providences, too, like stern attributes, we have learned to use for helps in our trusting. It happened that Rabbi Joshua was walking up Mount Zion one day with his brother, Rabbi Eliezer, and as they walked along they startled a fox, which ran out from among the rubbish. “Alas, my brother,” said Joshua, “this is a sad sign. Does it not show us the anger of the Lord against Israel? He has given Zion to be desolation and the foxes walk about her.” Eliezer replied, “True, my brother, but does it not also prove the faithfulness of Jehovah towards Zion, for inasmuch as He said that the foxes should go about her when she sinned, has He not also said that He will build her walls again? If He is thus faithful to His threats, will He not in due time, fulfill His promise?” Brethren, you must trust the Lord wholly and entirely, in everything and concerning everything. “Trust in Him at all times.” You must trust the dark side of Him. You must trust in the shadow of His wings as well as in the light of His countenance. Some of you have only learned to trust to the smile of His face, you must learn to trust in the blows of His fists. God bring us to that! “No,” you say, “we can never come to that.” Surely we can, for did not one of old say, “Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him”? That is precisely what we mean.

II. Under our second head we shall consider the grand privilege of the text, THE SECURITY OF BELIEVERS—“*They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abides forever.*” Mount Zion had in David’s day undergone a great many changes, and it has seen many more since, but it has never been removed. There it was when the Jebusite defied David, there it was when Araunah threshed his wheat, there it was when the temple gleamed in the sun, there it was when the Roman soldier cast the firebrand into the holy place, and it is there now. It has never been removed and it never will be. God’s children undergo a variety of experiences. Today their hearts are a place of sacrifice, and tomorrow a battlefield. By turns their soul is a temple and a threshing floor, but whatever their ups and downs may be, they shall never be removed from their ordained and appointed place. By the grace of God they are where they are, and where they shall be.

They shall never be effectually removed from that place before the Lord, in which infinite love has fixed them. Where, then, are believers? We answer first they are in the place of *justification*. As soon as they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, they were justified by faith. How many years have passed since then? Never mind—“there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” They have not fallen into the place of condemnation. They have not been driven from the honorable position of justified men, for “the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” The Lord has covered them with the righteousness of Christ, and cast all their sins into the depths of the sea, and therefore they must and they shall, stand in His favor as long as Zion’s famous rock abides in its place. “He that believes on

the Son has everlasting life.” “He that believes on Him is not condemned.” The sheep of Christ shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of His hand.

The believer is also in the place of *regeneration*, and out of that condition he shall never be removed. He was born again; prove that fact and there is no reversing it. He that is born again *is* born again. You cannot take from a man his first birth; neither can you take from a man his second birth. The thought is ridiculous, the fact is impossible. Are you a child of God? You are a child of God, and you can never be other than a child of God, either in time or in eternity. Have you a child? You may disown him, but he is yours none the less. Your child may be rebellious, and his character may make you sorrowful, but he is your child for all that. You cannot “unchild” him. Even so, if God is my Father, which I know He is, since He has taught me to trust in Him, then I may not question the perpetuity of my sonship, since it is an abiding thing, and I shall no more be removed from it than Mount Zion from its ancient seat.

Where is the believer? He is in the place of *the gracious purpose*—“for whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.” Being called, my brothers and sisters, you are a believer, for that is the mark of the heavenly calling. Therefore you can be sure that you were foreknown and predestinated, and you can be equally certain that from this predestination you shall no more be removed than the mountains shall be torn from their sockets, and thrown into the depths of the sea.

You are also in the place of *divine love*, dear to the heart of God, for the Father Himself loves you, and nothing shall make Him cease to love you. He did not love you because of anything good in you. When He chose you He knew what you would be, you will never surprise Him, whatever evil you fall into, for He has foreseen and provided for it all. And He has said, “I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you; for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, says the Lord that has mercy on you.”

Beloved, if you are indeed trusting in God, you are in the stronghold of *the covenant*. God has entered into bonds with you to bless you. By oath and promise, by two immutable things in which it is impossible for Him to lie, He has given you strong consolation concerning everlasting salvation in Christ Jesus. And you are like Mount Zion; you shall never be removed from your place in the covenant. Although your house is not so with God as you might desire, yet has He made with you an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

What is your position? Why, you are *in Christ*, one with your Lord and Head, a living member of His body. You are a part of the mystical Christ, and none shall dismember the Only-begotten, or rend in pieces the Lord of all. It can never be that He shall lose a single limb of His own august body. Till Mount Zion shall be torn from its eternal base none who are in Christ shall ever be torn away from Him. In this truth there is something to feed upon. Here is a downy couch of precious consolation to lie upon when you are sick, and a garden of delights to walk in when health returns. Here is meat for men, in the strength of which we may do, and dare, and die for our Lord.

“They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which can never be removed, but which abides forever.” This shall not only be a matter of fact as to the believer’s actual position with God, but to a large extent, this shall be true in his own consciousness as he advances in the life and walk of faith. Believers are too often tossed about in their minds, and suffer great shakings and moving of heart because they do not trust in the Lord as they should. These things ought not to be, for we ought to be steadfast and immovable. But by reason of infirmity and immaturity many are tossed to and fro as in a tempest. Still, even in these, deep in their soul their faith is earnestly keeping its hold, and does not permit them altogether to drift. At the back of a great deal of grievous unbelief, when we are in a depressed condition, there lives a faith which is not moved, but in secret takes hold as for dear life, biding its time till better days shall come. I remember another story of Martin Luther, which may fitly be told in this place. Great-souled Martin Luther could believe and doubt as much any man of his time. In believing he could excel the angels and in horrible thoughts of doubting he could almost match the devils. Great-hearted men are subject to horrible fits of faintness and despair unknown to minds of smaller caliber. One day he fell so low in spirit that his friends were frightened at what he might say or do. Things were going ill with the great cause, and the Reformer might in his dreadful condition have upset everything. So his friends got him out of the way, saying to themselves, “The man must be alone. His brain is over-worked.

He must be quiet.” He rested a bit, and came back, looking as sour and gloomy as ever. Rest and seclusion had not stilled the winds nor lulled the waves. Luther was still in a storm and judged that the good cause was shipwrecked. I will now give you my own version of the method adopted for the great man’s cure. He went home, but when he came to the door nobody welcomed him. He entered their best room, and there sat Catherine his wife, all dressed in black, weeping as from a death in the house. By her side lay a mourning cloak, such as ladies wear at funerals. “Ah,” says he, “Kate, what is the matter? Is the child dead?” She shook her head and said the little ones were alive, but something much worse than that had happened. Luther cried “Oh, what has befallen us? Tell me quick! I am sad enough as it is. Tell me quick!” “Good man,” said she, “have you not heard? Is it possible that the terrible news has not reached you?” This made the Reformer the more inquisitive and ardent, and he pressed to be immediately told of the cause of sorrow. “Why,” said Kate, “have you not been told that our heavenly Father is dead, and His cause in the world is therefore overturned?” Martin stood and looked at her, and at last burst into such a laugh that he could not possibly contain himself, but cried, “Kate, I read your riddle—what a fool I am! God is not dead, He always lives, but I have acted as if He were. You have taught me a good lesson.” It is only by realizing the everlasting, abiding love of God that they that trust in the Lord shall come to feel steadfast as Mount Zion which shall never be removed. The man of God may know that he is safe, and yet there may be such a rush and tumult in his experience that he may not be able to understand himself or realize his true position. This may happen even to more advanced believers. But as we grow in grace, the tendency is to reach a more even and equable condition. Experienced believers are not to be put about by every puff of wind. No, they come at last, to hold on their way in the teeth of all ill weathers, and like hardy mariners, make small account of the lesser storms of life. It is grand to gaze into the face of a patriarch who wears written on his placid brow the words, “He shall not be moved forever. His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.” Such men are the pillars of society, and help poor trembling doubting hearts to hope that there is yet something stable. Let it be our objective and desire to grow into such confirmed and established believers. The promise of God deserves unwavering faith, and why should we not render it, and thus become fixed in our repose of soul?

Once more, while it is delightful to consider the actual immovability of the believer and most profitable to seek after a growing establishment of faith, there is one point of permanence which we have already, and can never allow a question to be raised about. As to the gospel which we believe and teach, we are once and for all fixed and settled about it. Our creed is not a variable quantity, or a shifting cloud. We know whom we have believed, and are as fixed as Mount Zion as to the eternal verities upon which our hopes are built. Since we have trusted in the Lord we have at times, felt that we did not just then derive the support and the comfort that we expected from it, but what then? Shall we leave it and look elsewhere? God forbid! We are at a pass with all the world of doubters, thinkers, philosophizers and scientific dreamers. We know enough of the truth of the gospel to be resolved to hold it against legions of their order. We defy alike the council of infidels, and the hell of devils, we never will depart from the grand old gospel which we have received. No, my brethren, at the very worst, our gospel is better than their modern thought at the best. I would sooner drink the dregs of the wine vat of Christ when the berries are sour than I would quaff the sweetest wines on the lees well-refined which come of the vintage of unbelief. We are sure and positive in our faith in God and in His infallible Word. O unbelievers, we are in no degree moved from the certainty of our confidence by the depression of our spirits. You may catch us sometimes in the dumps and say, “Now you find the gospel does not cheer you as you thought it would.” But our answer is ready for you. We believe the gospel whether it is yielding us present comfort or not. We would sooner be God’s dogs than the devil’s darlings. And we would sooner feed on the husks of the gospel, if such there are, than on the finest of your wheat. Having learned to trust in the Lord, we are as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but which abides forever. As to the essential truth of the gospel, we defy the world in arms.

III. Now I have to finish. In the third place, let us consider THE EVIDENT REASON for all this. Why is it that they that trust in the Lord shall not be moved?

Why, first, because *they are trusting in the truth*. They have not believed a lie, and therefore they shall not be swept from their foundation. They are trusting in One who will not deceive them and cannot fail them. They have laid their foundation on a rock, have they not? If they had trusted to man, man

would fail or change, but, lo, they are trusting to One who is truth, power, immutability, holiness, justice—why should they be moved? I cannot imagine a reason. I ask again, why should they be moved?

They are trusting where their reliance is observed and welcomed. God loves to have many dependents about Him. It is His way of revealing Himself and manifesting His glory. In these later ages, do you not know what the Lord has been doing? He dwelt up yonder self-contained—God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, within His own supreme Person, self-sufficient. He needed nothing more, and if He willed anything beyond, it was that there might be creatures that could trust Him, love Him, hang upon Him, and depend upon Him. He went about in creation and in providence and in grace to make dependents. A great nobleman with a big house in a wide country is not content to be all alone, he needs servants and tenants, and if he is of a generous spirit, he seeks the poor. He wants poor neighbors to help and he says, “This Christmas time I must give something away—is there anybody needing a round of beef? Is there anybody needing their chimney set alight with a slab of beef? Is there anybody needing a blanket in this cold season?” Thus God must have dependents. He must have those about Him who need Him. He loves dependents, and I do not see why He should cast them away. Why should He? If this is what He desires, if He seeks such to worship Him, who believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, why should He reject them?

It is not the nature of God to cast away any who rely upon Him. On the contrary, He is very careful that faith should never have less than she has expected. He respects the courage of faith, He never confounds her. If you open your back door, and a robin comes bravely in out of the cold, do you drive him out? No, you are pleased with his assurance, and give him a hearty welcome. Even so does God deal with poor trembling souls when they come to Him. We read of Charles V., the German Emperor, that when a pair of birds had built their nest among the poles and lines of his pavilion, he would not allow it to be removed though the time was come for the camp to be on the march. The birds had trusted to him, and they would not be disappointed. The same zealous care does the Lord exhibit towards the trembling hopes and feeble confidences of poor souls that trust in Him. There is, therefore, no reason why they should be removed, since it is not like the Lord to cast them away.

Once more, *for a true believer to be suffered to perish would be violation of all the promises of God.* He has said to such, “I will never leave you, nor forsake you.” His own Word is, “the righteous shall hold on his way,” “He that believes in Him shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.” Now then, if these promises could fail, the child of God could be removed. But it is not possible so long as God is God, that he who trusts in the Lord shall ever be removed. As long as there is a God in heaven, every believer is safe. Let him go and rejoice in this—because it will bring glory to God to save him, but for him to be lost would put a slur upon the name of the Most High. The Lord bring us to a simple faith in Jesus, and keep us fixed there. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—PSALMS 124.
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